

**Ballymoney Borough Council
Resources Task Group**

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RESOURCES TASK GROUP

Report of Resources Task Group held on Monday 9th November 2009 at 7.00 p.m. in the McKinley Room, Riada House.

In the Chair: Ald J Simpson

Present: Ald F Campbell, C Cousley
Councillors, A Cavlan, J Finlay, M McCamphill, E Robinson.
Chief Executive, Director of Borough Services, Director of
Central Services, Head of Corporate & Development Services

26.1 Minutes of Meeting – 26th October 2009

It was proposed by Alderman Campbell, seconded by Councillor Finlay and
AGREED:

that the minutes of the group's last meeting on 26th October, 2009, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

26.2 Budget Issues 2009/10

2.1 Shortfall Festive Lighting Scheme 2009 (deferred from last meeting)

Council has agreed, on the recommendation of LAC No. 364 on 15/9/09 that the 2009 scheme, as detailed in the minute 364.5, circulated, be progressed. It also agreed that the budgetary shortfall (£6279) be further considered by the Resources Task Group. The Director advised that the projected budgetary shortfall was reported to LAC at budget setting time.

It was proposed by Councillor Robinson, seconded by Councillor Finlay:

that the budgetary shortfall of £6279 be found from within the existing budget of the directorate (BSD)

On being put to the meeting 4 members voted for the motion, with 3 abstentions. The Chair declared the motion carried.

2.2 Report on Budget Review Issues 2009/10, Update at 5 November 2009

Report entitled Budget Review Issues 2009-10, update RTG 5/11/09, circulated, was tabled. The report provided a composite synopsis of budget shortfall issues addressed/being addressed by management and spend authorised by Council outside budget provisions and already reported through relevant committees, as at 5th November 2009. Officers gave further information and clarification in response to questions raised.

26.3 Community Association Liaison (deferred from last meeting)

The group previously discussed the issue of officer support/liason for community associations, particularly community centre management committees, where support has been withdrawn, and identified the need for arrangements to be put in

place for communication between associations/committees and relevant Council officers. There was a particular issue identified as regards roles and responsibilities where associations were occupying council property.

The Council property estate management issue has been addressed by The Director of Borough Services. In respect of community associations (CA) which meet in Council premises, should any queries arise as regards such property, its maintenance and the facilities, these ought to be addressed by the CA, preferably in writing, in the first instance, to the Head of Amenities (HOA). Should contact be made by phone and the HOA is not available a message may be left at Borough Services Reception.

As regards the attendance at CA arranged inter-agency meetings, it is the intention that a Borough Services Directorate officer will attend, resource permitting, where the Director is informed of such events by way of a published agenda. The Directorate will only be represented by one officer at any such meeting.

Members noted the current position and the clarification provided by officers in response to questions posed regarding arrangements for officer attendance at CA meetings.

26.4 Report to RTG on possible 2009/10 in-year budget saving measures

Report, dated 5th November 2009, by the Chief Executive, addressing increase in estimated cost of services in 2008/09 and 2009/10; comparison of 2008/09 estimated expenditure against actual and outcome of work to date by CMT on achieving savings target set by Council of 3% across 2009/10 budgets, £85,000 against the target amount of £142,499. It was noted that management had a very limited time to look at what is a substantial piece of work; that some of the budget reductions offered would also lead to loss of levered income and to date uplifting of income budgets had not been considered.

The Chief Executive explained the management view that further savings would require decisions on curtailing or ceasing the provision of one or more services. As this will entail political choices he invited members to give guidance to management on services they wished considered for such treatment.

Following discussion on the report officers gave further information and clarification in response to questions. Members were advised that in the event of redundancy situations arising, and following adoption of the policy, members would have to determine a rationale for the selection of services to be reduced or discontinued.

Councillor Robinson put forward the following suggestions for examination - discontinuing overtime and bank holiday working; discontinue use of agency labour; further improvements in the move from paper to electronic communications; review of café operating arrangements; reduced opening hours / days of leisure centre. Councillor Finlay expressed the view that statutory services must be protected. It was agreed that any other member suggestions should be submitted to the Chief Executive by the earliest date to enable management to consider viability and consequences and a further report be brought to committee at its next meeting.

Arising from discussion on revised working arrangements arising from public holidays the Director of Borough Services undertook to provide for members a copy of information published on Christmas refuse collection arrangements, which

are in line with Council's agreed policy. If members wish to review the arrangements this can be addressed via relevant committee.

NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the committee meet again on 23rd or 24th November at 10.00 a.m.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

